

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUXEMBOURG 0267

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LU, FR

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER COMMENTS ON EC FOREIGN

MINISTERS MEETING AT GYMNICH APRIL 20-21.

SUMMARY: THORN SAID THAT THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD REACHED A GENERAL AGREEMENT ON THE NEED FOR INFORMAL BUT THOROUGH CONSULTATIONS WITH THE US. ONLY THE FRENCH WERE NON-COMMITTAL ON THE PROPOSED PROCEDURE, BUT THE ISSUE IS NOT LIKELY TO BE RESOLVED BEFORE JUNE AT THE EARLIEST. IF FRANCE OBJECTS TO CONSULTATION WITH THE US, THERE IS A REAL POSSIBILITY THAT EC POLITICAL COOPERATION WILL BE BLOCKED AND MOST EC COUNTRIES WILL INCREASE THEIR BILATERAL POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS WITH
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THE US. THORN SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT THE US WOULD

ACCEPT THIS INFORMAL PROCEDURE ON US/EC CONSULTATIONS, AND HE FAVORS COMPLETING THE NATO DECLARATION AND HAVING IT SIGNED AT CHIEF-OF-GOVERNMENT LEVEL IN OTTAWA IN JUNE. THORN ADDED THAT THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS WERE SOMEWHAT CONFUSED ABOUT THE US POSITION ON THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE LANGUAGE ON CONSULTATION IN THE NATO DECLARATION AND THE CONSULTATION PROCEDURES BEING WORKED OUT IN THE US/EC CONTEXT, AND HE ASKED THE US TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO EXPLAIN CLEARLY WHAT US VIEWS ON CONSULTATION IN BOTH SETTINGS SHOULD BE. END SUMMARY

A. ON APRIL 25 I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER THORN TO GET HIS IMPRESSIONS OF THE GYMnich MEETINGS. THORN SAID THAT SINCE NO PRESS OR ADVISORS WERE PRESENT AND NO DECISIONS WERE MADE, THE PARTICIPANTS COULD BE FAIRLY OUTSPOKEN. THE OUTCOME WAS THAT THE MINISTERS UNDERSTOOD EACH OTHER BETTER SUBSTANTIVELY AND IMPROVED THEIR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. FOLLOWING WERE THE HIGH POINTS OF THE GYMnich MEETINGS:

1. US/EC CONSULTATIONS

CONFIRMING REPORTS FROM OTHER POSTS, THORN EXPLAINED THAT A MAJORITY OF THE MINISTERS AGREED THAT CONSULTATIONS WITH THE US SHOULD TAKE PLACE "WHENEVER VITAL INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE". ALTHOUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTERS AGREED WITH THE FRENCH THAT THE EC AND US SHOULD NOT BE "TEN AT TABLE", A MAJORITY APPROVED THE IDEA THAT THE US SHOULD BE INFORMED OF EC THINKING ON ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST AFTER PRELIMINARY EC STUDY HAD BEGUN BUT BEFORE EVEN AN EC CONSENSUS HAD BEEN REACHED. THIS CONSULTATION COULD TAKE PLACE AT THE EXPERT, POLITICAL DIRECTOR, OR MINISTERIAL LEVEL. JOBERT SAID THAT THIS PROCEDURE WAS ACCEPTABLE TO HIM IF IT WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE NINE MUST UNANIMOUSLY AGREE TO CONSULT THE US ON A GIVEN POINT, AT A GIVEN LEVEL AND AT A CERTAIN TIME. SCHEEL AND THORN OBJECTED TO JOBERT'S FORMULATION SINCE THEY AND CALLAGHAN MADE IT CLEAR THAT IF THE FRENCH VETOED CONSULTATION WITH THE US, OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD IN TURN BLOCK POLITICAL COOPERATION AMONG THE NINE AND THEN ENGAGE IN

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BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE US. FOR EXAMPLE, THE EC/ARAB PROJECT IS PRESENTLY BLOCKED BECAUSE THE UK AND OTHERS WANT CONSULTATIONS TO TAKE PLACE WITH THE US BEFORE THE PROJECT GOES FORWARD. ALTHOUGH JOBERT CLAIMED NOT TO OPPOSE INCREASED BILATERAL CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN EC MEMBERS AND THE US, THORN SAID THAT THE FRENCH ARE WORRIED THAT THE ABSENCE OF POLITICAL COOPERATION AMONG THE NINE WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR FRENCH INFLUENCE TO EXERT ITSELF IN THE

EC.

THORN SAID THAT JOBERT DELIBERATELY DID NOT GIVE AN OPINION ON THE PROCEDURE DESCRIBED ABOVE ALTHOUGH SCHEEL SEEMED TO FEEL THAT THE FRENCH WERE IN TACIT AGREEMENT. JOBERT GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT PARIS WOULD CONSIDER THIS PROPOSAL BUT HE GAVE NO HINT OF WHAT THE FRENCH WOULD DECIDE IF, IN FACT, ANY DECISION CAN BE MADE BEFORE THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT.

THORN ADDED THAT THE EC DID NOT SEEK A FORMAL AGREEMENT WITH THE US BECAUSE SUCH AN ACCORD WOULD BRING DEMANDS FROM JAPAN, CANADA, AND OTHERS FOR A SIMILAR CONSULTATION AGREEMENT. AT GYMNICH DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER GULDBERG POINTED OUT THAT A WRITTEN CONSULTATION PROCEDURE WITH THE US WOULD BRING A REQUEST FOR A SIMILAR AGREEMENT FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL. THE EC WAS THINKING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY OF THE US IN SETTING UP THIS PROCEDURE FOR CONSULTATIONS ALTHOUGH NO SPECIFIC MENTION OF US/EC RELATIONS WILL BE MADE. THIS FORMULA IS DESIGNED TO MAKE THE CONSULTATION QUESTION ONE OF GENERAL INTERNAL EC POLICY SO AS TO REDUCE THE OPPOSITION FROM FRANCE AND OTHERS TO ANY SPECIAL CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE US.

THORN SAID THAT SCHEEL WAS TOLD BY HIS COLLEAGUES TO SOUND OUT THE US INFORMALLY ON THIS CONSULTATION PROPOSAL BUT THAT OTHER FOREIGN MINISTERS ALSO INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD DO THE SAME WITH US EMBASSIES IN EC CAPITALS. SCHEEL WAS ALSO INSTRUCTED TO TELL US OFFICIALS THAT THE EC WANTS A CLEAR INDICATION OF HOW THE US PLANS TO INITIATE CONSULTATION WITH THE EC ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST. THE FOREIGN MINISTERS WANT TO KNOW AT WHAT STAGE IN THE US

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DECISION-MAKING PROCESS THEY WILL BE INVITED TO COMMENT ON AMERICAN INITIATIVES. THORN SAID THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS WERE UNANIMOUS IN APPROVING THE NEED FOR RECIPROCITY ON AN EQUAL BASIS IN ALL CONSULTATIONS. BECAUSE OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, THORN SAID THAT THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS WILL PROBABLY NOT DISCUSS THE SUBJECT OF US/EC CONSULTATIONS AGAIN BEFORE THE MONTH OF JUNE. NO DATE WAS FIXED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTERS FOR THEIR NEXT MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. THE US/EC AND NATO DECLARATIONS

THORN SAID THAT THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS SEEMED CONFUSED ABOUT THE RELATION BETWEEN THE CONSULTATIONS ISSUE AND THE TERMINATION OF THE US/EC AND NATO DECLARATIONS.

FOREIGN MINISTER MORO, FOR EXAMPLE, SAID THAT HE OPPOSED GOING AHEAD ON THE NATO DECLARATION ALONE BECAUSE HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE US DID NOT WANT A NATO DECLARATION UNTIL THE CONSULTATION QUESTION IN THE EC/US DECLARATION WAS RESOLVED AS WELL. OTHER FOREIGN MINISTERS, INCLUDING THORN, SAID THAT THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE NATO DECLARATION NOW SEEMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE US EXCEPT FOR SOME FINAL LANGUAGE ON CONSULTATIONS, AND THAT THE US WOULD SIGN A SATISFACTORY NATO DECLARATION ALONE. SOME FOREIGN MINISTERS COMMENTED THAT THE US SEEMED INTERESTED ONLY IN THE CONSULTATION PART OF THE US/EC DECLARATION, WHICH LED THEM TO BELIEVE THAT THE US MIGHT BE TRYING TO GET LANGUAGE ON CONSULTATIONS IN THE NATO DECLARATION WHICH HAD NOT BEEN ACCEPTABLE TO THE EUROPEANS IN THE US/EC CONTEXT.

THORN SAID THERE WAS GENERAL CONFUSION ABOUT US INTENTIONS REGARDING THE CONTENTS OF THESE DOCUMENTS AND HE URGED US, THROUGH THE EC PRESIDENCY AND BILATERALLY, AS WELL AS IN THE NATO FORUM, TO MAKE CLEAR 1) WHAT LANGUAGE THE US WANTS ON CONSULTATIONS IN BOTH DOCUMENTS; AND 2) WHETHER ANY LINK EXISTED BETWEEN THE CONSULTATION PROCEDURES DEFINED IN THE NATO DECLARATION AND THE CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS MADE WITH THE EC. THORN SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY FAVORED A PRAGMATIC ARRANGEMENT FOR US/EC CONSULTATIONS AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 1 ABOVE WHICH WOULD BE UNWRITTEN, AND A FORMAL CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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EMBODIED IN THE NATO DECLARATION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 2 LUXEMBOURG 0267

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THORN SAID THAT HE WOULD WELCOME A CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING IN OTTAWA IN JUNE AT THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING TO SIGN THE NATO DECLARATION. HE PREFERRED THIS SCENARIO TO A VISIT BY PRESIDENT NIXON ON HIS WAY TO MOSCOW IN JUNE WHICH HE SAID MIGHT APPEAR AS "WINDOW DRESSING" FOR A TRIP WHICH WAS PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH US/USSR RELATIONS AND ONLY SECONDARILY WITH EUROPE. THORN SAID THAT HE FAVORED HAVING THE PRESIDENT COME TO EUROPE ON A SEPARATE TRIP, POSSIBLY FOR A CSCE SUMMIT MEETING LATER THIS YEAR. AT THAT TIME, PRESIDENT NIXON COULD MEET WITH VARIOUS EUROPEAN CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT EITHER INDIVIDUALLY OR IN THE NATO OR EC CONTEXTS IN BRUSSELS. THE ADVANTAGE OF A MEETING IN JUNE IS, THORN CONCEDED, TO HAVE PRESIDENT NIXON MEET WITH THE EC CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT BEFORE FRANCE
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ASSUMES THE PRESIDENCY ON JULY 1.

3. SCHEEL AND JOBERT

ACCORDING TO THORN, SCHEEL IS ALREADY "OUT OF OFFICE" AND HE IS DOING EVERYTHING HE CAN TO PROMOTE COMPROMISES AND AVOID CLASHES AND DIFFERENCES OF OPINION. THE RESULT IS THAT SCHEEL OFTEN MAKES MISTAKES IN INTERPRETING ATTITUDES BECAUSE HE ALWAYS TRIES TO MINIMIZE PROBLEMS. SCHEEL IS SOMETIMES RESPONSIBLE FOR MAJOR MISUNDERSTANDINGS WHEN HE NEGLECTS TO WARN HIS AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN COLLEAGUES THAT CONFLICTS HAVE TO BE FACED REALISTICALLY. THORN ADDED THAT SCHEEL PLANS TO RESIGN HIS OFFICE A WEEK OR TWO AFTER THE GERMAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, WHICH MEANS THAT HE WILL NOT BE REPRESENTING THE FRG AT THE OTTAWA NATO MINISTERIAL.

SINCE SCHEEL'S SUCCESSOR GENSCHER IS COMMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN A DANISH STATE VISIT WHILE THE OTTAWA NATO MINISTERS MEETING IS TAKING PLACE, THE GERMANS WILL NOT BE REPRESENTED IN NATO AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL. THIS SCHEDULING PROBLEM MEANS THAT THE FRG CANNOT BE COUNTED ON TO BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THAT MEETING, UNLESS OF COURSE IT IS ELEVATED TO CHIEF-OF-GOVERNMENT LEVEL AND BRANDT ATTENDS.

THORN COMMENTED THAT JOBERT IS PERSONALIZING HIS DIFFERENCES WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER ADVISED US NOT TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE. THORN SAID THAT HE BELIEVED JOBERT HAD LAUNCHED HIS CONFEDERATION PROJECT IN ORDER TO PROMOTE HIS OWN POSITION IN THE NEXT FRENCH GOVERNMENT WHICH MAY BE MORE PRO-EUROPEAN THAN ITS PREDECESSOR. THORN QUALIFIED JOBERT'S PROJECT AS "NONSENSE" AND HE CONDEMNED JOBERT'S "HYPOCRITICAL" CLAIM THAT POMPIDOU HAD RESTRAINED JOBERT IN THE PAST FROM BEING A MORE ACTIVE PRO-EUROPEAN. THORN SAID THAT JOBERT'S BEHAVIOR WAS DICTATED BY INTENSE PERSONAL AMBITION. JOBERT ADMITTED TO THORN IN GYMNIKH THAT POMPIDOU DIED A YEAR TOO EARLY FOR HIM TO REALIZE HIS OWN PRESIDENTIAL AMBITIONS. SINCE JOBERT IS NOT LIKELY TO REMAIN FOREIGN MINISTER IN THE NEXT FRENCH GOVERNMENT, THORN AGAIN COUNSELED THE US NOT TO ADOPT POSITIONS WHICH APPEAR TO BE DIRECTED AGAINST JOBERT PERSONALLY, AND WHICH MIGHT COMPROMISE RELATIONS WITH A NEW FRENCH

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GOVERNMENT BETTER DISPOSED TOWARDS A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION ON THE ISSUE OF CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE EC AND THE US. FARKAS

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